

**BOARD OF MADISON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**  
**August 13, 2019, Meeting Minutes**

On Tuesday, August 13, 2019, a meeting of the Board of Madison County Commissioners came to order at 9:50 a.m. in the Commissioners' Conference Room of the Administrative Office Building in Virginia City, Montana, with Commissioners Ron Nye, Chairman, Jim Hart, and Dan Allhands present. Laurie Buyan, Executive Assistant to the Madison County Board of Commissioners, was present to take minutes.

Those people in attendance at the meeting were Joe Brummell, Paul Marsh, Bonnie O'Neill, Vicki Tilstra, Shelly Burke, Margie Edsall, Joellen Moon, Cody Marxer, Alex Hogle, Trever McSpadden, Tammy Mahlstedde, Brett Schriock, and Jani Flinn.

**Approval of Minutes:** Dan Allhands moved to approve the July 18, 2019, Special Board of Commissioners meeting minutes regarding the Sheriff's Office air quality/ moisture issues, with corrections. Jim Hart seconded the motion. All voted aye and the motion carried. Dan Allhands moved to approve the July 23, 2019, Board of Commissioners meeting minutes with corrections. Jim Hart seconded the motion. All voted aye and the motion carried. Jim Hart moved to approve the July 24, 2019, Special Board of Commissioners meeting minutes regarding the Public Health Office relocation, as presented. Dan Allhands seconded the motion. All voted aye and the motion carried. Jim Hart moved to approve the August 6, 2019, Board of Commissioners meeting minutes with corrections. Dan Allhands seconded the motion. All voted aye and the motion carried. Jim Hart moved to approve the July 6, 2019, Board of Commissioners meeting minutes with corrections. Dan Allhands seconded the motion. All voted aye and the motion carried.

**Northwestern Energy Lineman:** Joe Brummell, Director of Emergency Services, met with the Board to discuss the availability of a lineman when an emergency situation occurs in Madison County. Joe presented the Board with a draft letter to Northwestern Energy and the Public Service Commission about the length of response time when Northwestern Energy is called upon to turn off utilities at the scene of an incident. He stated that the current local lineman, who has been great to work with and is very responsive, is about to retire. Joe is concerned that this position will not be replaced and that in emergency situations a lineman will need to be called out from a different location, leaving first responders unable to safely respond and conduct their duties due to live utilities at the incident. Joe stated that the Local Emergency Planning Committee has asked for support of the letter, and that the Montana State Fire Chiefs' Association and the State Volunteer Fire Association will sign on to the letter. There were suggested changes to the proposed letter. Joe will make the changes and get the letter back to the Board for signature. Joe and the Board also discussed a current Search and Rescue mission that is taking place in the Willow Creek drainage, south and west of Pony.

**Foundation Support of Madison valley Manor Project:** Paul Marsh, Nursing Homes Foundation Chairman, met with the Board to discuss a proposed capital campaign for the kitchen remodel project at the Madison Valley Manor. Bonnie O'Neill, Chief Administrative Officer, and Vicki Tilstra, Finance Officer, were present for this portion of the meeting. Paul stated that at their most recent meeting, the Foundation Board made and passed a motion to commit up to \$25,000 specifically for fund raising to benefit the project. Vicki asked if these funds would run through the County. Paul responded that the funds would go directly to the person doing the fund raising and that donations could also go through the foundation. Vicki stated that the Foundation would be considered a component unit of the County and therefore, would have to be reported through the County. Bonnie stated that the project will need approval from DPHHS. She suggested that Great West Engineering should be contacted to see if that has been done. Ron suggested conducting a meeting with Great West Engineering to discuss the entire project. Bonnie stated that she would like the meeting to be held at the Manor so that staff can be involved.

**Entitlement Distribution:** Shelly Burke, Treasurer, and Vicki Tilstra, Finance Officer, met with the Board to discuss entitlement distribution. Bonnie O'Neill, Chief Administrative Officer, was present for this portion of

the meeting. Shelly stated that the County receives entitlement payments each quarter and that they have been split the same way since 2001. At that time, Vicki worked with the auditors who helped develop a spreadsheet for the distributions. Vicki and Shelly agreed that the old spreadsheet was outdated. Vicki distributed a new list of suggested distributions, stating that it can be changed by the Board at any time. She stated that the County currently receives about \$225,000 quarterly and that she has redistributed it to help the nursing homes. Jim Hart asked if the road portion has changed. Dan asked about distribution to the fire districts, stating that Sheridan could use help to get their new fire hall built. Ron Nye asked about Twin Bridges, stating that they are also a small area and struggle for money. Vicki stated that, with the exception of Big Sky and Madison Valley Rural, the fire districts don't even know they get this money. She suggested leaving it as it is for this year and talk to the fire districts about changing it next year. Following discussion, Jim Hart moved to approve the entitlement distribution as presented by the Finance Director and the Treasurer. Dan Allhands seconded the motion. All voted aye and the motion carried.

**Weed Department Budget Adjustments:** Margie Edsall, Weed Coordinator, met with the Board to request adjustments to the preliminary budget for the Weed Department. Bonnie O'Neill, Chief Administrative Officer, and Vicki Tilstra, Finance Officer, were present for this portion of the meeting. Margie stated that certified mills came in much higher than she expected and that she has worked with Vicki to make some changes to the proposed budget. She is asking to reduce the mill request from 3.5 to 3 and still has a couple project she wants to complete. She will increase the amount in contracted services from \$12,000 to \$44,000 because she is working on a project to spray highway rights-of-way with a drone. There was discussion on the usage of drones in various areas for weed spraying. Margie will also increase the Equipment Budget because they are in the process of switching from 4-wheelers and pick-ups to using side-by-sides for spraying. Margie stated that the BLM has found additional funds in their budget and will be giving the Weed Department an additional \$25,000. She adjusted the BLM portion of the Weed budget to accommodate this amount. Following discussion, Jim Hart moved to approve the changes to the Weed Department preliminary budget as requested by the Weed Coordinator. Dan Allhands seconded the motion. All voted aye and the motion carried. There was further discussion about weed control on BLM, Forest Service, and State Land; and the cost of using a drone for weed control. Margie stated it will cost \$3,400 for approximately 12 acres.

**Property Tax Adjustment Request:** Joellen Moon, Representative for the Michael Johnson Estate, met with the Board to discuss a request to adjust taxes for the estate. Shelly Burke, Treasurer, and Bonnie O'Neill, Chief Administrative Officer, were present for this portion of the meeting. Shelly stated that the taxes in question are for a building on leased property and that the taxes went up for a few years but have now been reduced, adding that the value went from \$212,000 to \$80,000. There was discussion about why the values would increase when there have been no improvements to the property. It was noted that the Deputy County Attorney was contacted and didn't see an issue with reducing the tax liability for this property. Following much discussion, Jim Hart moved to reduce the 2016 taxes by \$1,544.74 and to waive the penalty and interest for each of the three years in question, 2016, 2017, and 2018, on Tax ID #7027110. Dan Allhands seconded the motion. All voted aye and the motion carried.

**Housing Board Survey Distribution:** Cody Marxer, Housing Board Member, met with the Board to discuss a survey that has been prepared to gather information for the housing board. Bonnie O'Neill, Chief Administrative Officer, and Tammy Mahlstedde, Human Resource Generalist, were present for this portion of the meeting. Cody stated that a website for the survey is up and running and will accessible for the entire month. She added that informational cards have been distributed in many locations and that they received over 500 responses the day it went live. Cody asked permission to distribute an email to County employees with the survey website. Following discussion, Dan Allhands moved to authorize the Housing Board to distribute the survey monkey website for the housing survey to County employees. Jim Hart seconded the motion. All voted aye and the motion carried.

**Lower Ulery's 4 Subdivision and PUD Preliminary Plat:** Alex Hogle, Planning Director, and Trever McSpadden, Haystack Development, presented the Board with the preliminary plat of Lower Ulery's 4 Subdivision and Planned Unit Development. Alex stated that this is a relatively small subdivision, reviewed the staff report for the project, and showed the location on a map. The proposal is for a Planned Unit Development (PUD) and preliminary plat of Lower Ulery's 4 Subdivision, a clustered condominium

development comprised of one 5.48-acre condominium lot containing 5 detached residential condominium units and one 9.68-acre open space lot accessed from Treeline Springs Road off of Moonlight Trail Road and proposed to be served by existing public water and wastewater systems. Alex added that there are three previous developments which left seven units available. This project will use five of the seven remaining units. There was discussion about easements, open space, wet lands, and water rights. After much discussion, Jim Hart moved to adopt the proposed findings of fact; approved the requested PUD plan and its design standard modification to allow 40-foot wide right-of-way for the internal road Thistle Way; and approve the Lower Ulery's 4 Subdivision preliminary plat, subject to the conditions of approval. Dan Allhands seconded the motion. All voted aye and the motion carried.

**Recommendation to Hire Nursing Homes Administrator:** Bonnie O'Neill, Chief Administrative Officer, presented the Board with a recommendation to hire a nursing homes administrator. Vicki Tilstra, Finance Officer, and Tammy Mahlstedt, Human Resource Generalist, were present for this portion of the meeting. Bonnie stated that two candidates were interviewed for the position and that the interview committee spent about six hours with each candidate. She noted that the scoring for the candidates was very close but that one of the candidates had since declined the position, making the choice easier. She added that he agreed to manage both facilities for \$100,000, the same amount as Darcel Vaughn, former Nursing Homes Administrator, had received. Based on the recommendation of the hiring committee, Dan Allhands moved to make a conditional offer of employment for the Nursing Homes Administrator Position to Dennis Carlson of Bennington, Idaho, subject to a background check and reference checks. Jim Hart seconded the motion. All voted aye and the motion carried. There was discussion about having an administrator in both facilities, or at least a manager, with a full-time office person at each facility. It was noted that driving back and forth between facilities is not easy and would be more difficult in the winter with bad weather. There was also discussion about conducting evaluations at regular intervals.

Bonnie and Vicki returned to the meeting later in the day to report that Mr. Carlson had accepted the conditional offer of employment for the Nursing Homes Administrator Position at the rate of \$100,000 per year and asked for moving expenses. Following discussion, Jim Hart moved to assist with moving expenses for the Nursing Homes Administrator Position upon verification of receipts. Dan Allhands seconded the motion. All voted aye and the motion carried.

**IT Department Update:** Brett Schriock, IT Director, presented the Board with an update on the IT Department. Bonnie O'Neill, Chief Administrative Officer, was present for this portion of the meeting. Brett stated that he has made contact with 3 Rivers Communications and they have moved the County bandwidth from 100 mbps to 250 mbps and reduced the bill to half the former amount. The IT Department has installed three new computers at the Library and has three new computers ready for the Sheriff's Department but will wait until they move to install them. The IT Department has responded to 180 help desk tickets and many other requests that did not go through the support system. They are currently setting up WSUS servers in both nursing homes and the Courthouse to push in updates that will help prevent ransomware and other attacks on the computer systems. They are in the process of tying the computer system at the two nursing homes together so that individuals can log on to their desktops and profiles will follow them working at either location. They have been working at the Dispatch Office quite a bit and are anticipating the Department of Revenue move. Brett also stated that they have set up the Ennis Chief of Police and his deputy set up on the SWIFT system as requested by the Sheriff. This is the same system that the Sheriff's Department uses.

**Claims:** The Board approved claims.

**Journal Vouchers:** Following review, Dan Allhands moved to approve Journal Vouchers for the 6/19 accounting period. Jim Hart seconded the motion. All voted aye and the motion carried.

**Purchase of Speed Indicator Signs:** The Board discussed electronic speed signs to place outside of towns within the County. It was noted that there are currently signs on one end of Sheridan, Alder, and Twin Bridges. There are also signs on both ends of Virginia City and Ennis. These signs were purchased by grant funding through the Sheriff's Office. Dan suggested getting four more signs. Ron stated that he feels they are affective. Following discussion, Dan Allhands moved to purchase four radar speed signs

from Amazon at the price of \$3,199 each, with funds coming from the Commissioners' contingency account. Jim Hart seconded the motion. All voted aye and the motion carried.

**Sale of Road District 3 Snowplow Trucks:** Jim Hart notified the Board that two snowplow trucks, a 1998 Freightliner 999, Vin #1FV2HFBA7WH961171, and a 1991 International 4000, Vin #1HTSEEN5MH330626, were sold by Road District 3 to Floyd's Truck Center in Belgrade, Montana, for the amount of \$31,000 for both trucks.

**Draft Recommendations for Coy Brown Bridge Fishing Access Site:** The Board discussed the draft recommendation from the Road Review Committee for the width of the right-of-way on the County Road commonly referred to as Judy Lane, at the location of the Coy Brown Bridge spanning the Ruby River. Ron Nye stated that from what he's read, there is no problem with the fishing access. Following discussion, Dan Allhands moved to accept the recommendation of the Road Review Committee and confirm that:

1. A county road, commonly referred to as Judy Lane, was duly established by the Madison County Board of Commissioners on September 18, 1886, and continues to exist at the location of the Coy Brown Bridge crossing the Ruby River, and
2. The width of the road and the bridges right of way is 60 feet, and
3. The public may gain access to the surface waters of the Ruby River at the Coy Brown Bridge for recreational purposes.

Jim Hart seconded the motion. All voted aye and the motion carried.

**Public Discussion on Items Not Listed on the Agenda but Within the Board's Jurisdiction:** Jani Flinn, Grant Administrator, reported to the Board that a grant that she applied for from the Department of Transportation has been approved for a 12 passenger bus for the Madison Valley Manor. Bonnie O'Neill, Chief Administrative Officer, was present for this portion of the meeting. Jani stated that the request was for \$66,000 and that Madison County will be responsible for a 20% local match, and that a bus will be provided rather than funding to purchase a bus.

**ADA Courtroom/Commissioners' Conference Room Discussion:** The Board reviewed an email from Ron Morrison, Rapid Electric, with a project estimate to finish the proposed ADA courtroom in the Administrative Office Building; and to install restrooms on the main floor of the old Courthouse. Ron asked if the project will need to be bid or if it could be done without going through the bidding process. Ron will get advice from the Deputy County Attorney regarding these projects.

**Calendars:** The Board reviewed calendars.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:00 p.m.

**Next meeting:** The next regular Commission meeting will be held on Tuesday, August 20, 2019, beginning at 9:30 a.m. in the Commissioners' Conference Room of the Administrative Office Building in Virginia City, Montana.

---

Ronald E. Nye, Chairman  
Board of Madison County Commissioners

Date Approved: August 20, 2019  
Minutes prepared by:

---

Laurie Buyan, Executive Assistant to the  
Madison County Board of Commissioners

Attest: \_\_\_\_\_  
Kathleen Mumme, Clerk and Recorder, Madison County